

Role Playing, Coaching, Observing, & Giving Feedback Reading 25

Relationship Skills & Healthy Relationships

Outlined below are generic directions for role-playing, coaching, observing, and giving feedback.

The best models for teaching social-emotional skills are athletic and musical teachers/coaches. To master skills, students need to:

1. Understand the need for the skill.
2. Understand what the skill is and see it demonstrated. Skills need to be specific, describable, and observable.
3. Practice the use of the skill.
4. Receive feedback on their use of the skill.
5. Reflect on and analyze their use of the skill to determine what they did well and what they need to do to be more effective.
6. Continue to practice, reflect on, and analyze their use of the skill to determine what they do well and what they need to do to be more effective.
7. Apply the skill in real-life situations and reflect on what they do well and what they need to do better to be more effective.
8. Continue to use the skill in real-life situations and reflect on what they do well and what they need to do better to be more effective.
9. Set a goal to continue to use the skill in real-life situations.

See How To Teach SES Skills in the How To Teach Social-Emotional Skills Module for a thorough explanation of these steps and the benefits of role-playing, observing, and receiving feedback in mastering skills.

The Benefits of Role-Playing, Coaching, Observing, and Giving Feedback

Role-playing provides students with the opportunity to practice a skill in class. Like a coach, we need to demonstrate the skill, provide multiple opportunities for them to practice or role-play it, give them feedback on their use of the skill, and provide a process for them to reflect on and analyze their use of the skill until they become proficient. Having students role-play, receive feedback, and reflect on and analyze their use of the skill will help them become proficient and internalize the skills.

Students can practice/role-play in groups of 4.

- One of the group members can role-play the skill.
- One student is the recipient of the skill,
- One person is a coach, and
- The other group member is an observer who provides feedback.

It is important to use student observers because they can collect more information and provide more feedback than teachers. In addition, when they use an observation form, they are learning how to use the skill as they observe and provide feedback, using the skill's definition in their feedback. It is important to rotate the coaching and observing/giving feedback roles, as students who have coached, observed, and provided feedback become more proficient than those who have not. When students are working in small groups, teachers can circulate, observe, and coach. See the [Observing & Giving Feedback Skill Card \(Relationship Skills & Healthy Relationships\)](#) for the steps on how to observe (using an observation form) and provide specific and detailed feedback. A copy is found below.

Coaching, observing, and giving feedback are skills that need to be taught, just like other social-emotional skills. Below is a generic process for role-playing, coaching, observing, and giving feedback, along with guidance on teaching these skills.

How To Teach The Skills of Role Playing, Coaching, Observing, & Giving Feedback

1. Select the social-emotional skill you will teach (e.g., active listening). Distribute a copy of that skill card. Ensure that you have helped students understand the usefulness of this skill and how their lives will be better if they learn the skill, and that students have an understanding of the different parts of the skill, and that you have demonstrated (like a coach) how to use it. See the reading for that skill, e.g., Listening & Inquiry Reading ([Relationship Skills & Healthy Relationships](#)).
2. Distribute copies of the observation form for the skill you are teaching, e.g., active listening ([Relationship Skills & Healthy Relationships](#)) and the Observing & Giving Feedback Skill Card ([Relationship Skills & Healthy Relationships](#)). A copy of the Listening & Observing Observation Form is found below.
3. Explain that they will be role-playing and will have the opportunity to role-play, coach, observe, and give feedback on what they observe. When role-playing, students should use a copy of that skill card, e.g., active listening ([Relationship Skills & Healthy Relationships](#)) to help them successfully use the skill.
4. Review the process for completing the observation form and the process for giving feedback. See the Observing & Giving Feedback Skill Card ([Relationship Skills & Healthy Relationships](#)). Demonstrate how to provide feedback.
5. Divide the class into groups of 4. Provide them with a role-playing situation (e.g., active listening).
6. Have each group develop their response (e.g., their active listening response). It may be helpful to have them write their response.
7. Ask several groups to volunteer to role-play with you. The group selects one person to role-play, while the other group members sit next to them to coach. If and only if the person role-playing gets stuck, can another group member offer suggestions. All students who are role-playing should use their copy of the skill card for that skill (to help them successfully use the skill). Have the rest of the class observe the person who is role-playing using the observation form for that skill (e.g., active listening) to give them practice observing.
8. After each role-play, ask for volunteers from the observers to provide feedback using the process outlined on the Observing & Giving Feedback Skill Card, including asking the person who was role-playing what they did well and what they need to do better next time. Provide the observer with feedback on how well they provided feedback. This process allows students to practice observing and, for some of them, the opportunity to give feedback, and for everyone to hear their feedback on giving feedback.
9. Have several groups repeat this role-playing process with you while the rest of the class observes, and volunteer observers provide feedback after each role-play. After each volunteer provides feedback to each observer, you provide feedback on how well they provided feedback.

10. Repeat this process until you believe they understand how to role-play, coach, observe, and give feedback.
11. Next, have them role-play the different situations (e.g., multiple active listening situations) in their groups using the process below.

Procedure/Directions For Role Playing, Coaching, Observing, & Giving Feedback

1. The following process may be used once students are skillful at coaching, observing, and giving feedback (see the process for teaching those skills above).
2. Select the social-emotional skill you will teach, e.g., active listening ([Relationship Skills & Healthy Relationships](#)). Distribute a copy of that skill card. Ensure that you have helped students understand the usefulness of this skill and how their lives will be better if they learn the skill, that students understand the different parts of the skill, and that you have demonstrated (like a coach) how to use it. See the reading for that skill, e.g., Listening & Inquiry Reading ([Relationship Skills & Healthy Relationships](#))
3. Distribute copies of the observation form for the skill you are teaching, e.g. active listening and the Observing & Giving Feedback Skill Card ([Relationship Skills & Healthy Relationships](#)).
4. Explain that they will be role-playing and will have the opportunity to role-play, coach, observe, and give feedback on what they observe. When role-playing, students should use a copy of that skill card (e.g., active listening) to help them successfully use the skill.
5. Divide the class into groups of 4.
6. Present the class with a situation that requires them to respond to you. For example, read a problem that requires them to give an active listening response. Have each group develop a response to this situation. It's best if they write down their response.
7. Ask a volunteer to role-play their group's response (e.g., an active listening response) with you in front of the class.
8. When you have completed the role play, provide feedback to the person who was role-playing.
9. Repeat this process until they understand how to use the skill successfully.

10. Have them begin role-playing the remaining situations in their groups one at a time. Before a group begins role-playing, have them agree on how to respond. It may be helpful to have them write out their responses. Once they have developed their response, they may begin role-playing.
 - One of the group members will use the skill, e.g., the active listening ([Relationship Skills & Healthy Relationships](#))
 - One student will be the recipient of the skill (e.g., reads the situation that requires an active listening response),
 - One person will be a coach, and
 - The other group member will observe and then provide feedback.
 - The observer will complete the Observation Form.
 - The coach will only offer suggestions if the person who is role-playing the skill gets stuck. The coach's primary role is to note what worked well, what didn't, and what, if anything, they would have done differently.
11. After each role-play, the observer provides feedback using the process outlined on the Observing & Giving Feedback Skill Card ([Relationship Skills & Healthy Relationships](#)), including asking the person what they did well and what they need to do better next time.
12. Next, they are to switch roles: the person who was using the skill becomes the recipient, and the observer and coach switch roles.
13. After each role-play, the observer provides feedback on what they did well and what they need to do to improve, until everyone has had the opportunity to role-play the skill.
14. After everyone has had the opportunity to play all 4 roles for one situation, bring the class back together and process their use of the skill using the processing questions below. Process their effectiveness as coaches, observers, and givers of feedback, and what they need to do to be more effective.
15. After processing their use of the skills for the first situation, continue the process for the additional situations, bringing the whole class back together to process after each situation.
16. While small groups are role-playing, you can circulate to gather information about students' competency. When walking around, you can intervene to improve effectiveness, correct misunderstandings and misconceptions about the use of the skill, and reinforce appropriate, competent use of the skill. You must decide whether to intervene with a specific group or wait and process with the entire class. The information you gather will help you determine whether you need to reteach and role-play the skill, or whether a simple reminder will suffice.
17. After each group has completed all the role-playing situations, bring the whole class back to process.

Processing Questions For Observers Include:

1. What parts of the skill did you use effectively?
2. What parts of the skill do you need to improve or do more consistently?

Processing Questions For Teachers Include:

1. What parts of the skill did you use effectively?
2. What parts of the skill do you need to improve or do more consistently?
3. What parts of the skill were easiest for you and why?
4. What parts of the skill were the most difficult for you and why?
5. What parts of the skill do you think will be easiest to use in real life and why?
6. What parts of the skill will you have the most difficulty with when you use them in real life and why?
7. What was it like to give feedback?
8. What was it like to receive feedback? How did it feel?
9. Was it easier or more challenging to give feedback or receive it? Why?
10. What would make it easier to receive feedback?
11. What would make it easier to give feedback?

Observing & Giving Feedback Skill Card 25

Process For Completing the Observation Form

1. Place a mark (/) every time you observe a behavior. Observation aims to record and describe behavior, providing others with an objective assessment of how well they used the skills. What is most important is that the observer be able to provide specific, detailed feedback on how many times the person used the skill.
2. When the person you observe uses an effective behavior that is not listed on the observation form, place a mark (/) in the "Other" space and note what they did on the back of the observation form.
3. When role-playing is complete, tally how many times they used the skill. While the observer tallies the results, the other group members should privately summarize their impressions of what the role-player did well and what they need to improve.

Process For Giving Specific, Detailed Feedback

1. The purpose of feedback is to provide information that helps others improve their skills and to reinforce their use of those skills.
2. For feedback to be helpful, it must be specific and detailed.
3. Avoid giving negative feedback.
4. Avoid all judgmental words such as "good", "bad", "excellent", etc.
5. Sit next to the person you give feedback to so they can look at the Observation Form while you provide feedback.
6. Be specific and detailed about how many times they used the skill.
7. Phrase feedback so it reviews the skill's definition to help them better conceptualize how it is to be used.
8. When giving feedback, use their name, make eye contact, and use "I Statements".

For example: "Todd, I observed you..." or "I heard you..." or "I noticed..."?

Specific examples of active listening & asking genuine inquiry questions include:

"I observed you actively listening/paraphrasing by saying It seems to me... 3 times."

"I heard you actively listening/paraphrasing by saying I get the impression that you are...?" twice

"I noticed you asked a genuine inquiry question by saying What makes you think that? twice."

"I didn't hear you ask a genuine inquiry question."

Avoid telling the person they did a good or a poor job. This does not help. What does “do a good job” mean? For feedback to be helpful, it must be prompt, detailed, complete, and ongoing. People need to understand specifically what they did well or specifically what they need to do better. For a compliment to be effective, it must specify exactly what is praiseworthy about what the person has done. If you want to give a compliment with specific feedback, use “I Statements”.

A specific example includes:

“I think you did an effective job when you continued to problem solve and negotiate to find a solution that met both of your most important needs.”

Giving a compliment is meant to make someone feel good. The intention behind giving feedback should be to help them understand what they did well and/or something they could do better.

Process For Giving General Impressions

After sharing your observations, ask them if they would like specific feedback on one thing you observed them doing particularly well. In most situations, when giving feedback or advice, it is important to ask them first. Don’t give unsolicited feedback or advice. Unsolicited feedback and advice are usually not well received, no matter how well-intentioned or good they are. When giving feedback and advice, always use “I Statements”.

If they say that they would like feedback here is what to say:

“Todd, one thing I observed you doing particularly well was...”

A specific example includes:

“Todd, one thing I observed you doing particularly well was paraphrasing feelings even when the person didn’t explicitly state what they were feeling.”

If someone you are giving feedback to doesn’t agree with you, don’t argue. You could summarize what they say and then ask them to share their perspective, but don’t try to change their mind. For example: “So you think you did ask genuine inquiry questions, is that right?” If they say “yes,” then you can say something like “okay” and leave it at that.

Ask Them For Their Impressions

After you have given feedback, ask them for one or two skills they think they did particularly well and one thing they think they can do better or do more consistently.

A specific example of what to say includes:

“What are one or two things that you did particularly well?”

“What are one or two things you want to do better or more consistently?”

An Example of an Observation Form: Listening Skills Observation Form 25

	Name	Name	Name	Name
<u>Paying Attention & Showing Interest</u>				
Avoid Interrupting, Judging, or Criticizing				
Give the Speaker Your Full Attention				
Make Direct Eye Contact				
Say Things Like “Yes”, “I See”, “Uh huh”, “mm”, etc.				
Other:				
<u>Using Brief Door Openers</u>				
Say: “Would You Like To Say More About That?”				
Say: “Do You Want Talk About It?”				
Other:				
<u>Active Listening: When Paraphrasing Say:</u>				
“It sounds like...?”				
“It seems to me...?”				
“It appears to me...?”				
“I can see that you are...?”				
“I get the impression that you are...?”				
“Let me see if I understand...(your position, what you want me to do, why you are angry at me...etc.)?”				
“It seems like you are feeling...?”				
“It seems like you are feeling...because...?”				
Ask, “Did I get that right?” “Did I hear you correctly?”				
Other:				
<u>Asking Genuine Inquiry Questions</u>				
I’m not sure I understand”				
“I’m not sure I understand completely. Would you say some more about...?”				
“How are you feeling about all of this?”				
“Why are you feeling this way?”				
“So what happened that got you so...				
“What do you think is going on?”				
“What do you think about that?”				
“What makes you think that?”				
“Can you say a little more about how you see things?”				
“Tell me about what led you to that conclusion”				
“Please say more about why this is important to you”.				
<u>When you think you fully understand, ask:</u>				
“Is there anything else?” or				
“Is there anything else I need to know to fully understand?”				
Other:				